



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

October 27, 2024
23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Announcements

Juice boxes are still needed at Street Help Shelter. The Welcome Centre Shelter for Women needs granola bars, fruit rollup-type items and another snack item for snack packs for children at the centre. Please leave donated items on the table in the Narthex.

Brown Bag Bible Study continues on October 30. The noontime study sessions will look at the coming Sunday's readings. Bring your lunch and we'll supply the coffee, tea or water. Join us for a deep and lively discussion.

Coming Up

The All Saints Service is scheduled for Nov. 3. This is the service in which we remember the saints in our lives who have gone on to the kingdom. The service will include a guest musician and is intended to assist attendees with processing their sense of grief. You are invited to bring a candle (a votive is preferred) to light and place before the altar. If you don't have a candle or forgot to bring one, don't worry. We'll have some available.

We Remember in our Prayers

In Residence: Cordelle, Dorothy

Members: Bunny, Donna, Ed, Joan, Susan, Connie, Lorraine, Brenda

Friends & Family: Anna, Asdis, Audrey, Dot, Jean, Mary, Randy, Roger, Rose, Frank, Tanya, Jeremy, Rachel, Nash, Jeff

Introduction to the day

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. We celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.

Hymns

INSHALLAH # 40 God welcomes all

ELW # 665 Rise, shine you people

ELW # 504 A mighty fortress is our God

ELW # 793 Be thou my vision



Prayer of the day

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

AMEN

First reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Psalm 46

¹ God is our ref-^luge and strength,
a very present^l help in trouble.
² **Therefore we will not fear, though
the^l earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake
in the depths^l of the sea;**
³ though its waters^l rage and foam,
and though the mountains
tremble^l with its tumult.
⁴ **There is a river whose streams
make glad the cit-^ly of God,
the holy habitation of^l the Most
High.**
⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it

shall ¹ not be shaken;
God shall help it at the ¹ break of
day.

⁶ **The nations rage, and
the ¹ kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth ¹ melts
away.**

⁷ The Lord of ¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob ¹ is our stronghold.

⁸ **Come now, regard the works ¹ of
the Lord,
what desolations God has
brought up- ¹ on the earth;**

⁹ behold the one who makes war to
cease in ¹ all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters
the spear, and burns the ¹ shields with
fire.

¹⁰ **“Be still, then, and know that ¹ I
am God;
I will be exalted among the
nations; I will be exalted ¹ in the
earth.”**

¹¹ The Lord of ¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob ¹ is our stronghold.

Second reading: Romans 3:19-28

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law
says, it speaks to those who are under
the law, so that every mouth may be
silenced, and the whole world may be
held accountable to God. ²⁰ For “no
human being will be justified in his sight”
by deeds prescribed by the law, for
through the law comes the knowledge of
sin.

²¹ But now, apart from law, the
righteousness of God has been
disclosed, and is attested by the law and

the prophets, ²² the righteousness of
God through faith in Jesus Christ for all
who believe. For there is no
distinction, ²³ since all have sinned and
fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are
now justified by his grace as a gift,
through the redemption that is in Christ
Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a
sacrifice of atonement by his blood,
effective through faith. He did this to
show his righteousness, because in his
divine forbearance he had passed over
the sins previously committed; ²⁶ it was
to prove at the present time that he
himself is righteous and that he justifies
the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of boasting? It
is excluded. By what law? By that of
works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For
we hold that a person is justified by faith
apart from works prescribed by the law.

Gospel: John 8: 31-36

³¹ Jesus said to the Jews who had
believed in him, “If you continue in my
word, you are truly my disciples; ³² and
you will know the truth, and the truth will
make you free.” ³³ They answered him,
“We are descendants of Abraham and
have never been slaves to anyone.
What do you mean by saying, ‘You will
be made free’?”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I
tell you, everyone who commits sin is a
slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not have
a permanent place in the household; the
son has a place there forever. ³⁶ So if the
Son makes you free, you will be free
indeed.”

Sermon

LOVE in all caps

God's grace and peace be with you this day and always ...

A pastor friend of mine once shared a story of a hospital visit that had been made some years earlier.

The pastor was visiting a woman in her 90s. She was at the end of her battle with cancer and other health issues. Doctors had thought the woman would have died some weeks earlier ... but she hung on through the pain.

The pastor arrived at the hospital room to offer her a prayer and sit with her for awhile.

The pastor later said that it was clear that the pain killers weren't enough ... she was gripping the bedrail so tightly that all the colour was out of her hand.

Tears trickled from her tightly closed her eyes.

She wasn't ready to go.

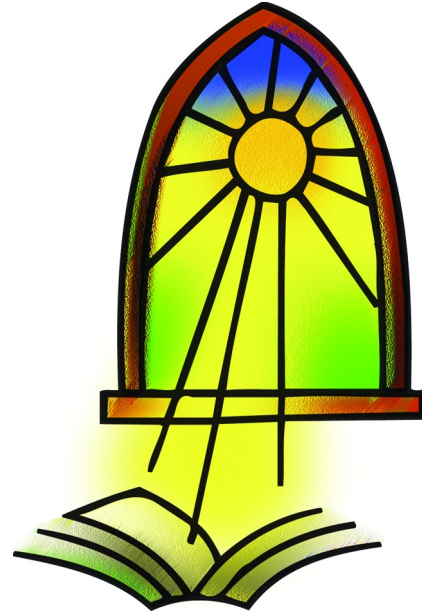
She whispered to the pastor that she had something to confess. The woman had been one of the most devout members of the congregation ... always present ... always serving.

The pastor couldn't possibly imagine what she could have to confess.

The pastor took her hand and leaned in.

Then, she shared her story ...

When she was a young woman ... she and her husband had come to



Canada and had begun farming in an isolated spot.

When the war began, her husband went off with other young men in the area and was killed. The woman found herself living alone out in the country ... her parents were gone and she didn't have any other family ... she barely spoke English ... and she was pregnant.

When the baby came, it was stillborn.

Living alone ... she was scared of what would happen next ... what would people say? ... would she be arrested and sent to prison? No husband ... a dead child ... no one to turn to ... she was terrified.

The woman carried what she did next from that small farmhouse to the hospital bed decades later.

In her panic, she used the cookstove to dispose of the baby's body ... and carried the weight on her heart ever since. How could God love her

after what she had done? She spent her life trying to be worthy of that love.

The pastor sat upright ... processing what had she had confessed ... then the pastor leaned in and whispered in her ear ... "God forgave you long ago."

The woman passed away later that night ... her heart unburdened.

This is Reformation Sunday.

It is a time when we remember Martin Luther's act that led to the church and the world being re-formed and transformed. It is when we are reminded that God's love comes to us without conditions.

In the years after he nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg ... Luther set to translating the Bible so that Germans who didn't read or understand Latin could hear the Bible in their own tongue.

As he wrote the translated scripture, Luther thought seven words and phrases were so important that he wrote them entirely in capital letters. If Luther were writing an email ... it would be like he was shouting the words at you.

One of those phrases appears in this morning's passage from Paul's letter to the Romans.

The version we heard a few moments ago changes the wording, so it's easy to miss the power behind the words.

In verse 22, we heard that God passed over sins ... in Luther's translation, the phrase is God **FORGIVES SINS** ... all in caps. Luther preached about a God who forgives sins

because Jesus has already atoned for humanity's sins.

Luther was transformed by the realization that through faith ... he himself was continually forgiven.

Before that moment, Luther had feared that ... even as an overly devout monk ... he was not good enough for God's grace.

Luther ferociously studied scripture and as he worked with Paul's letter to the Romans, he came to realize that it is our faith that brings us justification ... and brings us out of sin and into new life.

God's actions are what matters, not our own. We call this grace ... and in this constant forgiveness ... we feel God's tender mercy ... our hearts are continually unburdened ... we are continually healed ... and we know true freedom.

This morning's passage from the letter to the Romans lies at the centre of who we are as Lutherans. We are justified by grace through faith ... that is the lynchpin of our theology.

Recently, Lutheran pastor, theologian and author Nadia Bolz-Weber wrote in her blog about the importance of grace.

She wrote:

"I am Lutheran because it is my theological identity.

"Why? Because grace is the centre of gravity in Lutheran theology. Not personal righteousness. Not discipleship. Not morality. Not piety. Not progressive sanctification. Not activism. GRACE. And the thing that separates

grace from all of the other things I just listed is that with grace, God is the determining factor, not us and our efforts.”

Grace for Bolz-Weber is so important that she put it in all caps like Luther did with his seven words and phrases.

Grace ... for Lutherans ... is it.

Grace ... must sit firmly at the centre of all we do ... at the heart of all our relationships with God ... one another ... and the world ... not because there is any personal gain in it ... not because it boosts our status or sense self-importance ... but because grace frees us to love and to serve others through that love.

Reformation Sunday is when we remember Luther ... and it is a time to reflect on what we do with the grace we carry within our hearts.

Our actions do not result in our receiving more grace, BUT ... a “but” in all caps because it’s that important, ... it does lead to grace being known in other lives.

Knowing a God who loves us so much, that are sins are forgiven even before they are known is a transforming belief ... It is the knowledge that we don’t have to carry the baggage of guilt on our hearts ... that the love we have received should be shared ... because that is how our freed hearts are directed.

In today’s world ... grace is a radical concept.

It means we are not enslaved by the values and opinions of the world if we abide in Jesus. It means we can confess our shortcomings and know there is forgiveness and freedom.

In John, this morning, we hear Jesus tell his believers in the crowd that their belief in him ... their belief in the Word ... would free them from the sin that enslaves them.

Some in the crowd claim they are not slaves to sin because they are descendants of Abraham ... and ... by extension ... are God’s children. They believe their lineage makes them free.

The people believe that since they aren’t wearing shackles and can act as they want ... that they are free. Jesus ... on the other hand ... tells the people that if their words or actions hurt or diminish others ... then they remain shackled by sin and their freedom is an illusion.

Jesus calls on his believers to continue in his word so that they will know the truth and ... in that truth, they will be free from sin. They must abide in the Word.

Remember the opening words of John’s gospel:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

This is an invitation to the gathering ... and to us ... to undertake the continual process of knowing Jesus ... of intimately knowing Jesus ... so that we will walk in his steps and know his

Word ... and the truth of grace ... you are forgiven, so be forgiving.

Knowing the Word ... requires us to be in relationship with Jesus and through that relationship we can bring grace into the world.

The Word offers promise, hope and comfort to a divided people facing an uncertain future. By abiding in the Word, people deepen their relationship with Jesus ... change their priorities ... and respond to the world differently.

That is the promise of the Word ... a promise made known through forgiveness and grace.

It's no wonder Luther wrote with the caps lock key down ... and perhaps going out from this place ... we should live our lives as if the key is down for us as well.

FORGIVENESS ... GRACE ... and LOVE ... these are three words that should shout through our lives.

AMEN

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever.

AMEN

Blessing

May the Holy Parent ignite the fires of advocacy in your heart

May the Spirit place the scroll of knowledge on your tongue in tough conversations

May the Son + walk with you as you march with your queer siblings.

AMEN

EVEN MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS...

We are in the process of reviewing and updating our membership records. If you would like a visit from Pastor Chris, please call the church office and leave a message. Pastor Chris would be happy to visit and bring you communion, if you have difficulty attending church services.

**TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE PROGRAM**

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize *Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 1215 Parent Avenue, Windsor, ON N8X 4J1, to cause a cheque to be drawn on my account, each month as a contribution by me to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, as follows:

Total *monthly* contributions to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of:

_____ (\$ _____,00) per month
Distributed as follows:

Current Giving/Benevolence	\$ _____	per month
Global Hunger and Development Agency (GHDA)	\$ _____	per month
Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)	\$ _____	per month
ELCIC World Missions/Volunteers in Mission	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Total Monthly Giving:	\$ _____	per month

Contributor's name _____ Envelope # _____

Bank/Trust/Credit Union Name _____

Branch Address: _____

Account Number _____ Type of Account _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

This authority may be changed or cancelled by the contributor at any time.

To ensure accuracy, a sample cheque marked "VOID" must accompany this form.

The transfer of contributions to the ministry of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church will begin in the month *following* receipt of this authorization.